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Letter dated 7 November 2018 from the Chair of the Security Council Committee pursuant to resolutions 751 (1992) and 1907 (2009) concerning Somalia and Eritrea addressed to the President of the Security Council

On behalf of the Security Council Committee pursuant to resolutions 751 (1992) and 1907 (2009) concerning Somalia and Eritrea, and in accordance with paragraph 48 of Security Council resolution 2385 (2017), I have the honour to transmit herewith the report on Eritrea of the Monitoring Group on Somalia and Eritrea.

In this connection, the Committee would appreciate it if the present letter and the report were brought to the attention of the members of the Security Council and issued as a document of the Council.

(*Signed*) Kairat **Umarov**
Chair
Security Council Committee pursuant to resolutions 751 (1992) and 1907 (2009) concerning Somalia and Eritrea

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Letter dated 2 October 2018 from the members of the Monitoring Group on Somalia and Eritrea addressed to the Chair of the Security Council Committee pursuant to resolutions 751 (1992) and 1907 (2009) concerning Somalia and Eritrea

In accordance with paragraph 48 of Security Council resolution 2385 (2017), we have the honour to transmit herewith the report on Eritrea of the Monitoring Group on Somalia and Eritrea.

(*Signed*) James **Smith**
Coordinator
Monitoring Group on Somalia and Eritrea

(*Signed*) Jay **Bahadur**
Armed groups expert

(*Signed*) Charles **Cater**
Natural resources expert

(*Signed*) Mohamed **Babiker**
Humanitarian expert

(*Signed*) Brian **O'Sullivan**
Armed groups/Maritime expert

(*Signed*) Nazanine **Moshiri**
Arms expert

(*Signed*) Richard **Zabot**
Arms expert

Report of the Monitoring Group on Somalia and Eritrea pursuant to Security Council resolution 2385 (2017): Eritrea

Summary

The mandate was marked by historic developments in the region. Advances towards the resolution of prolonged disputes between Eritrea and its southern neighbours, Ethiopia and Djibouti, proceeded at an unprecedented pace in the second half of the mandate.

The thawing of relations between Eritrea and Ethiopia — after a two-year conflict followed by almost two decades of a state of "no war, no peace" — had an immediate impact on State support for armed groups in the region. The Ogaden National Liberation Front (ONLF), Oromo Liberation Front (OLF), Patriotic Ginbot Sebat (PG7) and Tigray People's Democratic Movement (TPDM) all entered into peace agreements with the Ethiopian Government. ONLF, OLF and PG7 were all removed from the Ethiopian Government's list of "terrorist" organizations. In August and September 2018, the Government of Eritrea hosted and facilitated peace negotiations between the Government of Ethiopia and ONLF, OLF and TPDM. On 16 September 2018, shortly before the submission of the present report, the Agreement on Peace, Friendship and Comprehensive Cooperation between Ethiopia and Eritrea was signed in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia.

The next day, also in Jeddah, the Presidents of Eritrea and Djibouti, Isaias Afwerki and Ismail Omar Guelleh, met and agreed to establish a new chapter of cooperation between the two countries after a decade-long dispute. It is not clear whether any progress was made regarding the anti-Djiboutian armed group the Front for the Restoration of Unity and Democracy (FRUD-Armé), or the implementation of Security Council resolution 1862 (2009).

The Monitoring Group on Somalia and Eritrea received testimonies indicating continuing Eritrean support for FRUD-Armé until early 2018, but found no solid evidence of any significant operations or attacks conducted by the armed group in Djibouti over the course of the mandate. The Group noted continuing low-level activity at the former Qatari observer force camp on the Eritrean side of Ras Doumeira, although it was not able to conclusively determine which parties were present in the area. The Group did not find any further evidence on the whereabouts of the remaining 12 Djiboutian combatants reportedly missing in Eritrea since 12 June 2008, and Eritrea did not provide information to the Group, as urged in paragraph 39 of resolution 2385 (2017).

For the fifth consecutive year the Monitoring Group found no evidence of Eritrean support for Al-Shabaab.

The Monitoring Group also found no evidence of large shipments of weapons or ammunition to or from Eritrea in violation of the two-way arms embargo.

The Monitoring Group received reports in January 2018 of the deployment of Sudanese armed forces to the Sudan/Eritrea border and the closure of the border crossing. Various Qatar-based media outlets reported that the deployment of both Egyptian and Eritrean troops to western Eritrea, and/or the smuggling of contraband, including weapons, across the border, had prompted the move. While the investigation was hampered by the Group's inability to visit the region, it found no solid evidence over the course of the mandate for the large-scale cross-border smuggling of arms between Eritrea and Sudan. The Group also found no evidence of the large-scale deployment of foreign troops in western Eritrea.

The Monitoring Group also confirmed that a consignment of four DA42-VI training aircraft was delivered to Eritrea. The Group considers it likely that the aircraft have been used by the Eritrean air force in Eritrea for training purposes.

Finally, the Monitoring Group noted the continuing expansion of United Arab Emirates military base in Assab and maintains that the two-way arms embargo on Eritrea does not allow for military activities by Member States involving the transfer of military materiel and personnel to Eritrean territory.

For the sixth consecutive year the Monitoring Group was not permitted to visit Eritrea to meet with representatives of the Government or conduct investigations. At the time of writing, the Coordinator of the Group was due to meet with a senior presidential adviser, Yemane Gebreab, in New York on 5 October.

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I. Introduction

A. Mandate

1. The mandate of the Monitoring Group on Somalia and Eritrea, as set out in paragraph 13 of Security Council resolution 2060 (2012) and updated in paragraph 41 of resolution 2093 (2013), was renewed in paragraph 46 of resolution 2385 (2017).

2. Pursuant to paragraph 48 of resolution 2385 (2017) and paragraph 13 (l) of resolution 2060 (2012), the Monitoring Group provided the Security Council, through the Security Council Committee pursuant to resolutions 751 (1992) and 1907 (2009) concerning Somalia and Eritrea, with a midterm update on 21 April 2018. The Group also submitted monthly progress reports to the Committee throughout its mandate.

3. With specific reference to Eritrea, the mandate of the Monitoring Group includes the following:

(a) To investigate, in coordination with relevant international agencies, all activities, including in the financial, maritime and other sectors, which generate revenues used to commit violations of the Somalia and Eritrea arms embargoes (resolution 2060 (2012), para. 13 (e));

(b) To investigate any means of transport, routes, seaports, airports and other facilities used in connection with violations of the Somalia and Eritrea arms embargoes (ibid., para. 13 (f));

(c) To monitor the implementation of the Council's call upon Eritrea to show transparency in its public finances, including through cooperation with the Monitoring Group, in order to demonstrate that the proceeds of mining activities are not being used to violate relevant resolutions (resolution 2023 (2011), paras. 12 and 16);

(d) To monitor the implementation of the Council's demand that all Member States, in particular Eritrea, cease arming, training and equipping armed groups and their members, including Harakat al-Shabaab al-Mujaahidiin (Al-Shabaab), that aim to destabilize the region or incite violence and civil strife in Djibouti (resolution 1907 (2009), paras. 16 and 19).

4. The mandate of the Monitoring Group is also derived from the listing criteria established in paragraph 15 of resolution 1907 (2009). This includes monitoring and reporting regarding individuals and entities: (a) violating the arms embargo; (b) providing support from Eritrea to armed opposition groups that aim to destabilize the region; (c) obstructing implementation of resolution 1862 (2009) concerning Djibouti; (d) harbouring, financing, facilitating, supporting, organizing, training, or inciting individuals or groups to perpetrate acts of violence or terrorist acts against other States or their citizens in the region; and (e) obstructing the investigations or work of the Group.

5. Another component of the mandate concerns monitoring compliance with the travel ban and asset freeze established under paragraphs 10 and 13 of resolution 1907 (2009). However, there are no individuals or entities on the sanctions list established and maintained pursuant to Security Council resolutions 751 (1992) and 1907 (2009).

6. In the course of the investigations, members of the Monitoring Group travelled to Bahrain, Côte d'Ivoire, Denmark, Djibouti, Ethiopia, France, Ghana, the Netherlands, Oman, Qatar, Seychelles, Somalia, Sudan, Sweden, Tanzania, Turkey, United Arab Emirates, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, the United Republic of Tanzania and the United States of America.

7. The Monitoring Group was based in Nairobi and comprised the following experts: James Smith (coordinator), Mohamed Babiker (humanitarian), Jay Bahadur (armed groups), Charles Cater (natural resources), Nazanine Moshiri (arms), Brian O'Sullivan (armed groups/maritime) and Richard Zabot (arms). Robert Dekker (finance) resigned from the Group on 1 September 2018 and did not contribute to the contents of the present report.

B. Methodology

8. The evidentiary standards and verification processes outlined in the previous reports of the Monitoring Group apply to the work conducted during the mandate under review.

9. The methodology used for the present report is as follows:

(a) Collecting information on events and topics from multiple sources, where possible;

(b) Collecting information from sources with first-hand knowledge of events, where possible;

(c) Identifying consistency in patterns of information and comparing existing knowledge with new information and emerging trends;

(d) Continuously factoring in the expertise and judgment of the relevant expert of the Monitoring Group and the collective assessment of the Group with regard to the credibility of information and the reliability of sources;

(e) Obtaining physical, photographic, audio, video and/or documentary evidence in support of the information collected;

(f) Analysing satellite imagery, where applicable.

10. In its investigations, the Monitoring Group conducted meetings with a broad range of sources, including Member States, United Nations agencies, non-governmental organizations, the Eritrean diaspora, academics, journalists and former members of armed groups. From these sources, the Group received witness testimony, photographic evidence and both confidential and open-source documentation.

11. The Monitoring Group's inability to enter Eritrea, or conduct investigations and engage with authorities within Eritrea, continued to impede the fulfilment of its mandate.

12. Once again, and in conformity with past guidance provided by the Committee, the Monitoring Group endeavoured to include as much of the testimony and evidence as possible in its final report.

II. Arms embargo

A. Allegations of arms smuggling from Eritrea to Sudan, and the deployment of Egyptian troops in western Eritrea

13. The Monitoring Group received reports throughout January 2018 of the deployment of Sudanese armed forces to the Sudan/Eritrea border in Kassala state, Sudan, and the closure of the border crossing. Various Qatar-based media outlets

reported that the deployment of both Egyptian and Eritrean troops to western Eritrea,[1] and/or the smuggling of contraband, including weapons, across the border, had prompted the move.[2]

14. The Panel of Experts on the Sudan similarly noted reports from Sudanese authorities and media that Egyptian and Eritrean troops had gathered in the border region alongside Darfurian rebels.[3] The Panel concluded, while noting the continuing presence of a small number of former Justice and Equality Movement (JEM) fighters in Eritrea, that such reports were largely exaggerated.[4]

15. The Monitoring Group similarly found no evidence indicating the presence of Egyptian troops or Darfurian rebels amassing in western Eritrea. Nonetheless, a state of emergency was announced in Kassala state, in eastern Sudan, in December 2017, and Sudanese troops were deployed to the border region. At the time of writing, the state of emergency was still in place. It was unclear whether the border with Eritrea remained closed.

16. The Monitoring Group has previously reported on the use of the land border between Eritrea and Sudan for illicit activities, including the smuggling of weapons (see, for example, S/2014/727, paras. 19–33).[5] While its investigation was impeded by its inability to visit the region, the Group found no solid evidence over the course of the mandate of the cross-border smuggling of weapons between Eritrea and Sudan.

17. On 21 February 2018, the Monitoring Group sent correspondence to the Republic of the Sudan requesting the support of Sudanese authorities to facilitate a visit to Khartoum and the border region, but did not receive a response.

B. Shipment of training aircraft to Eritrea and training of Eritrean pilots

18. In its 2017 final report, the Monitoring Group expressed concerns regarding attempts by representatives of the Eritrean Air Force to source materiel under the auspices of the Eritrean Ministry of Transport and Communications (S/2017/925, paras. 40–47). In the same report, the Group also reported that Eritrean air force cadets had received training at the Khalifa Bin Zayed Air College in the United Arab Emirates from 2012 to 2015 (ibid., paras. 36–39).

19. In July 2017, a consignment of four DA42-VI aircraft — frequently used for training purposes and manufactured by the Austrian-based company Diamond Aircraft Industries GmbH — was delivered to Eritrea. Representatives of Diamond informed the Monitoring Group in May 2018 that the aircraft had been sold to the Eritrean Ministry of Transport and Communication via Yogesh Anchan of the United Arab Emirates-based company Transworld Aviation FZE as Diamond's "official

[1] See, for example, "Sudan deploys more troops to Eritrea border", Al Jazeera, 15 January 2018. Available at www.aljazeera.com/news/2018/01/sudan-deploys-troops-eritrea-border-180115053325960.html.

[2] See, for example, "Sudan closes border with Eritrea due to alleged weapons smuggling", Gulf Times, 7 January 2018. Available at www.gulf-times.com/story/577286/Sudan-closes-border-with-Eritrea-due-to-alleged-we.

[3] E-mail correspondence from the Panel of Experts on the Sudan, 2 August 2018.

[4] The Panel of Experts on the Sudan reported that Eritrean support for JEM ceased in late 2006 — prior to the implementation of sanctions on Eritrea — when its relations with Sudan improved following the signing of the Eastern Sudan Peace Agreement. JEM fighters were permitted to remain in Eritrea but were reported to have returned to civilian life.

[5] In its 2017 report, the Monitoring Group on Somalia and Eritrea also reported that the owner of a consignment of blank-firing pistols had intended to transport the pistols overland from Eritrea to Sudan for onward sale to retailers (S/2017/925, paras. 14–17).

representative and agent for Eritrea in selling aircraft."[6] Diamond also confirmed that a short training course — covering maintenance and use of the DA42 aircraft — had been organized by Transworld Aviation in Asmara in January 2018.

20. On 20 August, responding to correspondence sent by the Monitoring Group, Transworld Aviation provided a copy of the contract, dated 15 November 2016, and signed by Yogesh Anchan, as Managing Director of Transworld Aviation, and Kibreab Hidru, as Director of the Eritrean Ministry of Transport and Communications.[7] Given previously reported evidence that the Ministry has been used as a guise by the Eritrean air force for international contracts in order to evade sanctions, as well as previous evidence that the United Arab Emirates provided training to Eritrean air force cadets, the Group considers it likely that the DA42-VI aircraft have been used by the Eritrean air force in Eritrea for training purposes, and that those who received training from Transworld Aviation served as members of the Eritrean air force.

C. Continuing expansion of the United Arab Emirates military base in Assab

21. The two-way arms embargo on Eritrea does not allow for military activities by Member States involving the transfer of materiel or personnel to or from Eritrean territory, nor are these activities covered under the terms of possible exemptions thereto.

22. Satellite imagery of the port of Assab indicated the continued presence of multiple naval vessels. On 24 November 2017, a defence analysis publication reported the presence of vessels from the Royal Saudi Naval Forces at the port of Assab, for the first time, on 15 November, including two Badr-class corvettes and an Al-Jawf (Sandown)-class mine countermeasures vessel.[8] Satellite imagery also indicated the continuing expansion of the military base approximately 12 km north-west of the port since October 2017. The base continues to host multiple fixed- and rotary-wing military aircraft. The same defence analysis publication also reported the presence, on 3 August 2018, of an unmanned aerial vehicle "with dimensions matching those of the Wing Loong II", at the base.[9]

MV *Jabal Ali 7*

23. On 24 April 2018, the MV *Jabal Ali 7* (International Maritime Organization No. 7725154) — a vessel owned by the United Arab Emirates-based Naif Marine Services Co. (PSC) — loaded a consignment of military hardware vacated from the General Gordon Military Base in Mogadishu. Although the vessel failed to transmit an automatic identification signal from 1 April to 5 May, the Monitoring Group received information that it subsequently docked at the port of Assab, Eritrea, where

[6] Letter from Diamond Aircraft Industries GmbH to the Monitoring Group, 4 May 2018. The Monitoring Group acknowledges the cooperation extended by the Permanent Mission of Austria to the United Nations and Diamond Aircraft Industries GmbH during the investigation.

[7] In a leaked cable from the Acting Consul General of the United States in Dubai, United Arab Emirates, dated 5 August 2006, Yogesh Anchan is listed as "Yemen military portfolio" for Transworld Aviation. Available at www.wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/06DUBAI4995_a.html (accessed 22 September 2018).

[8] Jeremy Binnie, "Saudi warships seen at Assab", IHS Jane's Defence Weekly, 23 November 2017. Available at www.janes.com/article/75896/saudi-warships-seen-at-assab.

[9] Jeremy Binnie, "United Arab Emirates deploys Wing Loong II UAV to Eritrea", IHS Jane's Defence Weekly, 15 August 2018. Available at www.janes.com/article/82382/uae-deploys-wing-loong-ii-uav-to-eritrea.

it offloaded military equipment.[10] If that information is accurate, such transfer of materiel would constitute a violation of the arms embargo on Eritrea. The Group sent correspondence to Naif Marine Services requesting all relevant documentation pertaining to the transit of the *Jabal Ali 7*. On 7 June, the Group received a response from Naif indicating that the company was not in possession of the requested information, as the *Jabal Ali 7* is under indefinite charter to the Ministry of Defence of the United Arab Emirates. Therefore, according to Naif, "calling ports and cargo handling...strictly belong [to] United Arab Emirates armed forces and [are] under their management". A subsequent letter sent to the United Arab Emirates on 6 July requesting the information did not yield a response.

24. On 9 July, the Monitoring Group received an e-mail from a representative of Naif Marine acknowledging that the *Jabal Ali 7* had docked at Assab, although claiming that the vessel had not offloaded any military hardware.[11] Nonetheless, the presence of military equipment in Eritrean territorial waters represents a technical breach of the arms embargo.

III. Support for armed groups in the region

25. In paragraph 16 of resolution 1907 (2009), the Security Council demanded that all Member States, in particular Eritrea, cease arming, training and equipping armed groups, including Al-Shabaab, that aimed to destabilize the region or incite violence and civil strife in Djibouti.

26. For the fifth consecutive year the Monitoring Group found no evidence of Eritrean support for Al-Shabaab.

A. Patriotic Ginbot Sebat

27. The Monitoring Group first provided information on Ginbot Sebat in its report for 2014 (S/2014/727, paras. 78–86), followed by updates in 2015 (S/2015/802, paras. 58 and 59), 2016 (S/2016/920, paras. 61–70) and 2017 (S/2017/925, paras. 65–73). In its report for 2016, the Group noted that the group had renamed itself Arbegnoch Ginbot Sebat, or Patriotic Ginbot Sebat (PG7), following its merger with the Ethiopian People's Patriotic Front in January 2015.

28. The Monitoring Group received, but was unable to independently verify, reports of minor incursions by fighters aligned with PG7 from Eritrea into northern Ethiopia in late 2017 and early 2018. On 10 April 2018, Neamin Zeleke, a senior member of PG7, was interviewed on the British Broadcasting Corporation programme HARDtalk regarding the appointment of the new Prime Minister of Ethiopia, Abiy Ahmed Ali, on 2 April. During the interview, Zeleke acknowledged that the Chairman of PG7, Berhanu Nega, was present in Eritrea at the time. Zeleke further stated that Eritrea harbour[s] thousands of our freedom fighters...not only our organization but others...they harbour and they shelter and they provide them with all forms of assistance.[12]

29. On 7 June 2018, the Monitoring Group met with another senior member of PG7, Tadesse Biru Kersmo, in the United Kingdom. Kersmo informed the Monitoring Group that the leadership of PG7 supported political developments in Ethiopia since

[10] Information from a Western intelligence source, provided to the Monitoring Group through an intermediary, 15 May 2018.

[11] According to the company representative, the vessel had taken only second-hand construction materials on board.

[12] Interview available at www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b09yrz44 (accessed 12 April 2018).

the election of Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed. On 22 June 2018, the PG7 Executive Committee released a statement on its website announcing the suspension of "all self-defence operations using firearms in all regions of Ethiopia", and that PG7 forces had "received strict orders to refrain from any form of armed resistance".[13]

30. On 5 July 2018, PG7 was removed from the Government of Ethiopia list of designated terrorist organizations. On 1 September, the Ethiopian-based Fana Broadcasting Corporate announced the return of a number of PG7 fighters to Ethiopia from Eritrea via the town of Humera.[14] That agency announced the return of Berhanu Nega to Ethiopia on 9 September after 11 years in exile.[15]

B. Ogaden National Liberation Front

31. The Monitoring Group first provided information on Eritrean support for the Ogaden National Liberation Front (ONLF) in Somalia in its 2006 report (S/2006/229, para. 15). In its 2014 report, the Monitoring Group reported continuing Eritrean support for ONLF in Somalia (S/2014/727, paras. 56–69). Since 2014, the Monitoring Group has found limited evidence on continuing support from Eritrea for ONLF.[16]

32. From 1 to 7 July 2018, ONLF convened another conference in Dekemhare, on the outskirts of Asmara.[17] In an unconfirmed communiqué from the conference, the group expressed "gratitude to the Government of State of Eritrea under the sound leadership of President Isaias Afwerke and the Eritrean people for their unwavering support to the just cause of the Somali people in Ogaden."[18] The Monitoring Group found no evidence, however, of any further substantive support from Eritrea for ONLF during the course of the mandate.

33. On 5 July 2018, ONLF was also removed from the Government of Ethiopia terrorist list. On 12 August, ONLF announced a cessation of "all military and security operations directed against the Ethiopian Security Apparatus in the Somali territory (Ogaden), until negotiated comprehensive cessation of hostilities is reached with the Ethiopian government."[19] On 19 September, the Eritrean Ministry of Information announced on its website that "the modalities of peace talks" were being discussed in Asmara, and that "substantive talks [would] be finalized soon."[20]

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[13] Patriotic Ginbot Sebat, "Patriotic Ginbot7 has unilaterally suspended all self-defense activities using arms", press release, 22 June 2018. Available at www.patriotg7.org/?p=2426.

[14] Fana Broadcasting Corporate, "Patriotic Ginbot 7 left its base in Eritrea to Ethiopia", 1 September 2018. Available at fanabc.com/english/2018/09/patriotic-ginbot-7-left-its-base-in-eritrea-to-ethiopia.

[15] See, for example, Fana Broadcasting Corporate, "Patriotic Ginbot 7 leaders return to Ethiopia", 10 September 2018. Available at fanabc.com/english/2018/09/patriotic-ginbot-7-leaders-return-to-ethiopia/.

[16] The Monitoring Group was unable to corroborate allegations that Eritrean military personnel visited ONLF training camps in Somalia in June 2017 (see S/2017/925, para. 28).

[17] Ogaden News Agency, "Declarations of the 3rd National Congress of the Ogaden National Liberation Front", 7 July 2018. Available at www.ogadennet.com/?p=99897.

[18] Ibid.

[19] Ogaden National Liberation Front, "Declaration of Unilateral Ceasefire (ONLF)", press release, 12 August 2018. Available at http://onlf.org/?p=981.

[20] Eritrean Ministry of Information, "Peace discussion between Ethiopian government and ONLF", 19 September 2018. Available at www.shabait.com/news/local-news/27083-peace-discussion-between-ethiopia-and-onlf.

C. Oromo Liberation Front and Tigray People's Democratic Movement

34. The Monitoring Group last reported on substantive Eritrean support for the Oromo Liberation Front (OLF) in its 2012 report (S/2012/545, annex 1).[21] On 7 August 2018, the Eritrean Ministry of Information announced on its website that OLF, led by its Chairman, Dawud Ibsa Ayana, had signed a reconciliation agreement with the Government of Ethiopia, represented by the President of the Oromia Region, Lemma Megersa, in Asmara.[22]

35. In its previous reporting, the Monitoring Group noted the defection and surrender to the Government of Ethiopia of a faction of the Tigray People's Democratic Movement (TPDM) previously based in Eritrea and its return to Ethiopia.[23] On 28 August 2018, it was reported on the Eritrean Ministry of Information website that the remaining faction of TPDM in Eritrea, led by its Chairman, Mekonen Tesfai, had reached an agreement with the Government of Ethiopia in Asmara to continue its movement "through peaceful means".[24]

D. Front for the Restoration of Unity and Democracy

36. The Monitoring Group first provided information regarding Eritrean support for the anti-Djiboutian armed group, the Front for the Restoration of Unity and Democracy (FRUD-Armé), in its 2011 report (S/2011/433, paras. 268–276), followed by updates in 2015 (S/2015/802, paras. 60–63), 2016 (S/2016/920, paras. 72–82) and, most recently, in 2017 (S/2017/925, paras. 93–107).

37. In July 2018, Djiboutian officials asserted that Eritrea continued to support FRUD-Armé and that its ongoing activities in Djibouti continued to undermine the normalization of relations between Djibouti and Eritrea, thus obstructing the implementation of resolution 1862 (2009), in violation of paragraph 15 (c) of resolution 1907 (2009).[25]

38. In March 2018, the Monitoring Group conducted interviews with two individuals — X, who served in the Djiboutian Armed Forces, and Y, a civilian — who were abducted by FRUD-Armé in June 2017 in northern Djibouti and released on 18 February 2018.[26] X and Y both informed the Group that they had been held at the Anda'ali camp in Eritrea.[27] At the time, the camp was occupied by between 50 and

[21] Brief reference to OLF is also made in S/2014/727, para. 84.

[22] Eritrean Ministry of Information, "Ethiopian Government and OLF sign Reconciliation Agreement", 7 August 2018. Available at www.shabait.com/news/local-news/26817-ethiopian-government-and-olf-sign-reconciliation-agreement.

[23] Further details on TPDM can be found in S/2012/545, paras. 51–52; S/2014/727, paras. 70–77; S/2015/802, paras. 50–57; S/2016/920, paras. 53–60; and, most recently, in S/2017/925, paras. 83–92.

[24] Eritrean Ministry of Information, "TPDM reaches Peace Agreement with Ethiopian Government", 28 August 2018. Available at www.shabait.com/news/local-news/26946-tpdm-reaches-peace-agreement-with-ethiopian-government.

[25] According to reports provided by Djiboutian officials, FRUD-Armé conducted two attacks during the course of the mandate: on 1 March 2018, it allegedly opened fire on a passenger transport vehicle between Tadjourah and Obock, injuring three passengers; and, on 3 June 2018, it allegedly set fire to construction equipment on a worksite located close to Dourra, Tadjourah region. Neither attack was claimed by FRUD-Armé.

[26] The interviews took place in the presence of Djiboutian authorities in government facilities. At the request of the two individuals, their names have been withheld. The Monitoring Group detailed the attack in which the individuals were kidnapped in its 2017 report (S/2017/925, para. 104).

[27] Anda'ali is approximately 24 km north of the town of Dadda'to on the Eritrea-Djibouti border.

100 FRUD-Armé fighters, equipped with various weapons. X and Y further noted that the camp was in close proximity to two small Eritrean military camps, and that the group's food supplies would be replenished each month by an Eritrean military truck. Both X and Y reported observing shipments of weapons arriving in the camp.[28]

39. On 31 July 2018, the Monitoring Group interviewed a former member of FRUD-Armé, Z,[29] who claimed to have surrendered to the Djiboutian authorities in May 2018. Z also informed the Group that Anda'ali was occupied by approximately 50 armed fighters and replenished with food supplies every month by an Eritrean military truck. Z also provided the Monitoring Group with descriptions of the Anda'ali camp, the Eritrean military camp located a few hundred metres away, and the surrounding region, which were largely consistent with satellite imagery of the area.

40. The Monitoring Group also conducted several interviews with the political leader of FRUD-Armé, Mohamed Kadamy, throughout the mandate. Kadamy denied receiving military support from Eritrea, but confirmed that FRUD-Armé had received some weapons from "military in the region"[30] and further support from members of the Djiboutian diaspora. Kadamy also acknowledged the attack in June 2017 in which X and Y had been kidnapped.[31]

IV. Acts obstructing implementation of resolution 1862 (2009)

A. Activity at Ras Doumeira

41. Satellite imagery captured between October 2017 and September 2018 demonstrated continuing low-level activity at the former Qatari observer force camp on the Eritrean side of Ras Doumeira.

42. On 18 February 2018, the Monitoring Group met with the Qatari Foreign Minister's Special Envoy on Counterterrorism and Mediation in Dispute Settlements, Mutlaq al-Qahtani, to discuss the state of mediation between Djibouti and Eritrea. The Special Envoy informed the Group that all Qatari observer forces had vacated the disputed border region and that Qatar was unable to pursue any mediation if not welcomed in its role by both sides in the dispute. The Special Envoy further informed the Group that, while vehicles, vessels and infrastructure had been left at the camp in Ras Doumeira when Qatari observer forces withdrew, no weapons or ammunition had remained. The Group met with the Special Envoy again on 1 July 2018. On that occasion, the Special Envoy claimed that Eritrean personnel had entered the camp hours after the withdrawal of Qatari observer forces in June 2017.

43. On 22 March 2018, with support from the Djiboutian Armed Forces, the Monitoring Group conducted a mission to the standoff position south of Ras Doumeira in Djibouti. The Group was unable to verify claims made by representatives

[28] The statements raise questions regarding the number of weapons that such a small group of fighters requires, particularly given the subsequent small scale and infrequency of attacks associated with FRUD-Armé.

[29] At his request, his name has been withheld.

[30] Telephone interview with Mohamed Kadamy, 29 March 2018, and meeting with Kadamy on 15 June 2018.

[31] Kadamy claimed that the purpose of the attack was to capture a Djiboutian serviceman with the intent of later conducting an exchange for a captured FRUD-Armé fighter. In the attack, the civilian, Y, was mistaken for a serviceman. Kadamy claimed that X and Y had been detained in the mountainous regions of northern Djibouti, not in Eritrea, but did not provide specific details of the location.

of the Djiboutian Armed Forces that Eritrean troops were occupying the former Qatari observer force camp in Ras Doumeira.[32]

B. Djiboutian combatants missing in action since the clashes of 10 to 12 June 2008

44. Over the course of the mandate, the Monitoring Group continued its investigations into the whereabouts of the remaining 12 Djiboutian combatants reportedly missing in Eritrea since 12 June 2008.[33] It sought information from the combatants' families,[34] diplomatic sources and international organizations, but found no further information regarding their fate or whereabouts.[35]

45. Article 3 of the Mediation Agreement entered into by Eritrea and Djibouti in June 2010 stipulates that both parties shall provide the State of Qatar with a list containing the number and names of prisoners of war detained by them, if any, and a list containing the number and names of missing persons. In a meeting on 1 July 2018, the Qatari Special Envoy, Mutlaq al-Qahtani, informed the Monitoring Group that Eritrea had not provided any information on Djiboutian prisoners of war or missing Eritreans.[36]

46. The Monitoring Group further established that, in 2014, Djibouti submitted a "Communication against the State of Eritrea" to the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights, regarding the missing combatants.[37] Djibouti accused Eritrea of refusing to provide information regarding the combatants; systematically not allowing the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) to access prisoners of war and breaching its obligations under the African Charter.[38] As at September 2018, the Commission had not reached a decision on the matter.

47. In July 2018, the Monitoring Group interviewed the 19 remaining Eritrean prisoners of war held in Djibouti since 12 June 2008. All expressed their concern that the Government of Eritrea considered them "defectors". In December 2017, they were all granted refugee status under the mandate of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and were issued with refugee identification documents.[39] In February 2018, Sweden was identified by UNHCR and ICRC for resettlement of the 19 prisoners of war.

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[32] The Monitoring Group observed that the majority of Djiboutian forces remained based at the former Qatari camp at Moulhoule, approximately 15 km south of Ras Doumeira, while observation posts were located at a distance of approximately 5 km from Ras Doumeira.

[33] See paragraph 4 of resolution 1907 (2009), most recently updated in paragraph 39 of resolution 2385 (2017).

[34] On 30 July 2018, the Monitoring Group met with the families of the 12 missing combatants in Djibouti. They all confirmed that they had received no information on the whereabouts of their relatives since 12 June 2008.

[35] Staff of the International Committee of the Red Cross staff also confirmed that it had no information or access to any prisoners of war inside Eritrea in a meeting with the Monitoring Group in Djibouti, on 30 July 2018.

[36] Meeting at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Doha, 1 July 2018.

[37] Communication submitted by the Republic of Djibouti against the State of Eritrea, before the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights, 21 July 2014.

[38] It also argued that the noncompliance by Eritrea with various Security Council resolutions regarding Djiboutian prisoners of war amounted to obstruction of resolution 1862 (2009).

[39] On 31 July, UNHCR informed the Monitoring Group that it had granted the prisoners of war refugee status for humanitarian reasons, owing to the fact that they had remained unrecognized by the Government of Eritrea for a decade.